

TMI LCN CHAPTER APPLETON WI

by Laurin Bellg

As I was updating our *MeetUp* page for TMI Wisconsin recently, I decided to read the comments local chapter meeting participants had left during the past two years. They reminded me why we do this work of coming together in our local chapters throughout the world to share our deep curiosity about consciousness.

One person writes, "Awesome meeting! I'm so glad that the Monroe Institute has helped establish local chapters where we can actively bring Bob Monroe's work to many more people." Another expressed, "I am delighted with the sense of safety, honesty and community we are creating. There is a great energy and openness, and the group has a loving and accepting spirit. Perfect environment for exploring experiences that are at the limits of our conventional understanding."

In May of 2010 I was flying home from *Guidelines* and feeling the usual combination of elation and grief that was a typical post TMI experience for me. Elation from the direct connection with spirit that seems to define my time at the Institute and grief at having to once again leave the good company of so many people in one space who seemed to speak my language, and knowing I would not have a chance to make similar connections for another year or two when I would be able to return for another program.

Shortly thereafter, I made an easy decision to start TMI Wisconsin in the hope that I could somehow foster those connections at home and introduce others to The Monroe Institute and a technology path that has literally changed my and my family's life. So, in September of that same year after setting up a *MeetUp* site and gathering a few friends together we had our first meeting.

I had few expectations for that inaugural meeting, so what has unfolded over these last two years easily exceeded them. Primarily by word of mouth, we've attracted about two new people per month such that our membership now exceeds eighty people!

What the core charter group has realized with awe, is that it literally has nothing to do with us and everything to do with the hunger and intense curiosity people have about connecting with and exploring who we really are and what we are capable of.

We started with a monthly Saturday meeting, and have expanded since our inception to three meetings a month. This has been possible as two other members stepped forward to become chapter leaders as well. This has offered us the luxury of being able to rotate facilitation roles

so that we are also able to be participants. I feel particularly fortunate that my husband, Al Bellg, who is also involved in the TMI Professional Division, has stepped forward as one of the chapter leaders.

Eric Roycraft, the other of our chapter leaders, interestingly has been doing Hemi-Sync since the mid 1980s when he participated in a regional outreach workshop in Green Bay, Wisconsin featuring *Human Plus*. In fact, our third monthly meeting that we just added in August focuses specifically on Human Plus. Eric leads us through a Human Plus exercise, which we listen to over wireless headphones while relaxing in beanbag chairs. After receiving the function-specific encoding we set forth to apply it in our daily lives then return a month later to discuss the results. It's a new concept to do this as a Local Chapter, but the preliminary results are pretty exciting!

One thing that has happened that I really did not anticipate, but have been so touched by, is the real sense of community and level of involvement in TMI that has developed among the membership. When Paul Rademacher, former executive director of The Monroe Institute, went on his speaking tour we invited him to come to Wisconsin. In October of 2011, the members of TMI Wisconsin really stepped forward to arrange several high-profile speaking engagements for Paul – including our local university – and did everything from publishing and distributing advertisement from their own resources to providing refreshments and transportation.

Several members have been inspired by local chapter meetings to go to Virginia for residential programs and some have stepped forward to become more involved with the work of the Local Chapter Network itself. Janet Stratton did all of the formatting for the recent revision of the Handbook, created several power point presentations that we were able to use at this past LCN Retreat, including an inspirational video montage of the history of the LCN. She also recently stepped forward to fill a crucial need to become a backup regional coordinator to step in when current regional coordinators are on vacation. She volunteered hours of her own time working with Beth Vaughan and Candie Sanderson to receive the necessary training to assume this role.

So two years later I look in awe at the group that initially began because I wanted to find people of like mind in my own area and realize that it is very much moving forward on its volition. I think it has happened that way because the TMI local chapter format is uniquely qualified to feed and inspire people who are passionate about consciousness exploration and are eager to connect with others who feel the same.

We recently had a two-year anniversary party, complete with a TMI logo cake. As I looked around the room at those who had gathered that day, some of whom had shared the quotes above, I realized I felt every bit of the elation I always bring back with me from the Institute and none of the grief of leaving people who share my interest in consciousness exploration.

